APHORISMS

OF

John Calvin.

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TORONTO, 1901.

CALVIN'S APHORISMS

AND

Letter to Francis the First,

IN DEFENCE OF THE REFORMATION.

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LETTER TO FRANCIS THE FIRST,

En Defence of the Reformation.

BY A GRADUATE OF OXFORD UNIVERSITY.

"Sufficit ut ad tempus simplex quiddam et uniforme doceaamur."—Tacitus De Oratoribus.

It sufficeth that instruction be simple, uniform, and in season.

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PREFACE.

My aim, in the following publication, is to exhibit, in a brief form, the mind of John Calvin; what his opinions were on the subject of theology in general, and how he defended the Reformation in particular. The One Hundred Aphorisms, or General Principles, drawn from his profound work "The Institutes," probably by Beza, correctly pourtray the former; his letter to Francis the First contains a summary of the latter.

The restoration of these records of wholesome doctrine, and of an argumentative protest against error, to public consideration, after many years of undeserved oblivion, would seem to be an act of justice to Calvin, and of usefulness to Churches

which have so deeply imbibed both his spirit, and his language.

Christendom, released in a greater or less degree from the yoke of sacerdotal domination, and accustomed, as the case may be, courteously to tolerate, or reasonably to respect, the functionaries of religion, is, at the present hour, startled by the promulgation of a new crusade, ambitious to restore the visible Church of Christ to that supremacy from which it was dethroned at the Reformation; to constitute the clergy as sacrificers and dispensers of reconciliation,—as intercessors and mediators with God, rather than as his messengers and ministers; again, as depositaries rather than as expounders of religious truths; as donors, rather than as teachers of forgiveness through Christ; as successors of the Apostles by right of lineage, and literal descent, rather than by office, gifts, endowments; in brief, the end, if not the immediate object is, to exalt a Christian ministry as lords over God's heritage,

rather than as shepherds and examples to the flock. They who advocate, and they who impugn this lofty definition of the Clerical office, have pleaded their cause with much learning and subtilty, yet the additional testimony of a master mind, the evidence of Calvin, the great doctor of theology, may reasonably claim a hearing in this court of conscience. His sentiments, both as to the source and extent of a church's authority, and as to many other subjects of controversy at the present day, will be found embodied in his Dedication to Francis the First, and in the accompanying Aphorisms; and may probably surprise many Christian brethren, who, calling themselves after his name, have departed from his doctrine.

Moreover, as the testimony of the Fathers of the Christian world, in divers ages and nations, has been appealed to in support of assumptions which are held by Protestants in general, not to be warranted by the awardment of God's word, and of a

doctrinal interpretation adverse to sound criticism and wholesome knowledge, though favourable to a retrograde movement of the human mind in these respects, it hence becomes of value to the argument to ascertain, what was the estimate in which these voluminous writers were held by Calvin, who was deeply acquainted with their works. On this subject he delivers his judgment with truth and candor, he grants the usefulness of these time-honoured doctors as witnesses, but denies their supremacy as masters. So confident was he that the general tenor of their opinions was favourable to the principles of a Reformed Church, that he hath fearlessly appealed to the verdict of the Fathers, and hath drawn a long chain of apposite extracts from their writings, as well as from the decrees of Councils and Popes. Hence he stops the cavils of opponents who brought against him the charge of novelty,—of a departure from ecclesiastical usage; and, at the same time, accredits his definition of the Church of Christ, not

as discoverable in external splendour and forms, but in the true preaching of God's word, and the lawful administration of the Sacraments.

A modern, living in the nineteenth century, if he calmly compares the Fathers prior to the Reformation with those posterior to this epoch, is tempted to prefer the latter as theologians. He bears in mind that the most ancient fathers, though worthy Christians, were not men of learning and sound judgment. It is undeniable that they believed in the Sibylline oracles* (forgeries), in the instant coming of a sensual Millenium, in a purgatorial fire after death, to prepare the souls of all believers for gradual accessions of glory, and in certain other fanciful conceits.

Their writings are occasionally as questionable as their opinions, and are suspected of corruptions and interpolations, specially the epistles attributed to Ignatius : at all events, they have not that impress

* See Blondel on the Sibylline oracles.

of genuineness which is stamped on Holy Scripture, and is recognized by the assent of the Church at large. Their successors surpassing them in human learning were infected with those peculiarities of the eastern and western philosophy which render them unsafe guides as interpreters—although such erratic tendencies may not discredit their simultaneous testimony as to facts.

The Fathers, posterior to the Reformation, by which I mean the notable Divines of the Churches of England and Scotland, and of the orthodox communions in Britain, form a body of scholars, linguists, critics, and commentators, on whose side would seem to be the balance of advantages and of success.

Taught, and disciplined by sounder learning—and by a more correct philosophy than their predecessors had imbibed, they also had the benefit of gathering whatsoever wholesome grain could be winnowed from the accumulated theology of preceding centuries.

The accompanying Address of John Calvin to Francis the First may be quoted, not only by the way as a favourable specimen of high principled loyalty, but particularly so of a modern at the era of the Reformation, applying the pure use of Scripture, of reason, and the qualified voice of antiquity, in an honest search after truth, and in its full and manly exposition. As a Protestant manifesto it claims to be no less "timely" now, than it was in the year 1536. On the same plea I justify the translation of the One Hundred Aphorisms of Calvin, "or his general rules" of Faith, which are attached to his "Institutes," in an edition printed at Leyden, 1574.

These brief, and clear sentences, are the skeleton of that body of doctrine which hath the fulness and completeness of its form in the "Four Books of Institutes." The Aphorisms, whether to be ascribed to Calvin himself, or more probably to Beza, are evidently the production of a master mind, and for

many reasons, valuable. For they not only condense Calvin's theology into a small compass, thus affording to the inquirer, whose industry and research will not bear too severe a pressure, a bird's eye view of genuine Calvinism, but they impart intelligible and definite notions of sacred truths, not scattered, separated, and standing in lonely abstraction, apart from one another, but in due order, and conjunction, so strung together, so advisedly disposed, so skilfully adjusted, as to compose an harmonious system of religion and morals. In our age and nation, when all are so hasty to teach, and talk about religion, and when, from a too general confusion and crudeness of ideas on the subject, a Babel diversity of language is heard on all sides, such an intelligible code of faith and virtue is useful, and I hope will be welcomed.

I foresee the prejudice which the name alone of Calvin will awaken in minds which too justly associate it with a deed of indefensible blood-guiltiness,

and unfairly with the doctrines of a dismal fatalism —but with regard to the latter, "Let no man fear, where no fear is."

If the Aphorisms, No. 47 and 64, afford a correct statement of John Calvin's decisions on faith and election, the prominent themes of modern Calvinism, it must be admitted that the doctrine of individual election (whether fairly to be gathered from Scripture, or not), is in his hands, at least, innocent, and wholesome. For, according to Calvin, "These four effects of faith, viz.: penitence, a Christian life, justification, prayer, lead us down to a sureness of election."

If so, election, humanly speaking, depends upon certain pre-existent causes—it lasts as long as they last, it is cancelled when they cease, and the whole doctrine amounts, in point of fact, to this: that the faithful christian is elect, and the elect christian is faithful—propositions too harmless to alarm the most orthodox. But spurious Calvinism is wholly

of another complexion. It announces the doctrine of individual election abstractedly—disjoined from adjuncts, irrespective of moral causes, accompaniments, qualifications, practical results, and tests. Much evil has consequently ensued upon the unskilful use and application of a sublime article of the faith, most persuasive in itself to moral goodness in life, and to peace at the hour of death. Suspicion tarnishes, and a timid silence too often hides from promulgation the doctrine of the sureness of election; which, being perverted from its true sense and proper intention, exhibits amongst us only a doubtfulness of origin, a sickliness of growth, and a moral degeneracy in its fruits. If the present publication in any degree helps forward the cause of sound knowledge and piety, by correcting error, or imparting the principles of a healthy judgment to a fellow disciple, its purport will be accomplished.

TRANSLATOR.

THE

ADDRESS OF JOHN CALVIN.

To Francis,

THE MOST POWERFUL AND ILLUSTRIOUS MONARCH—THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING OF THE FRENCH, AND HIS OWN PRINCE, DOTH JOHN CALVIN PRAY PEACE AND SALVATION IN CHRIST.

When I first set my hand to this work, I thought of nothing less than of writing that which afterwards should be presented to your Majesty. It was simply my design to deliver certain elementary principles, by which they who are touched with any zeal for religion might be formed according to a correct piety. And I toiled in this work with the utmost sweat of my brow, specially for my fellow countrymen of France, very many of whom I understood to be hungering and thirsting after Christ, but very few of whom I perceived to be rightly imbued with even a moderate knowledge of Him.

The book itself evidently shews that this was my purpose, composed as it is after a simple and plain method of teaching. But when I saw around me that the furiousness of certain evil men so far prevailed in your kingdom, that there was no seat there of wholesome doctrine, I seemed to myself able to render a valuable service, if, by the same work, I could deliver to the French a general system of faith, and could utter before you a special confession of the same, that you yourself might learn what is the nature of that doctrine against which those furious men rage with such vehemence, who, at this day, are troubling your kingdom with fire and sword. Neither will I fear to confess, that I have comprehended in this work for the most part the substance of that doctrine, which they loudly call out is to be mulcted with prison, exile, proscription, and the fire, and to be extirpated by sea and by land.

Well I know with what dark impeachments they would fill your ear and mind, so that they may render our cause as hateful as possible to you; but it is a point to be well weighed according to your clemency, that there would remain no freedom from guilt, either in words, or in deeds, if it may suffice to accuse. Truly, if any one doth plead, with a

view of creating odium against us, that this doctrine, the reasonableness of which I am now endeavouring to state to you, has been condemned by universal suffrage, and has long since been stabbed through and through by many precedents of judgment against it, his assertion would amount to nothing more than that it has violently been cast down, partly by the faction and the potency of its enemies, and partly that it has been oppressed in an insidious and fraudulent manner, by lies, by tricks, by calumnies. There was violence, because bloody sentences are recorded against it, without its case having been heard; there was fraud, because charges of sedition, and evil doing, were brought against it, contrary to what it deserved.

That no one can say that we complain of such matters without due cause, you, O most noble King, can testify, how that our doctrine is daily traduced in your presence, as, that it hath respect to no other end than to wrest the sceptre from the hands of kings; to cast headlong into ruin tribunals, and all courts of justice; to subvert all orders and political establishments; to disturb the peace, and quiet of the people; to abolish all laws, divide lordships and possessions, and, in short, to turn every thing upside

down. Yet you, in this, hear but the smallest particle of detraction. Certain horrible [reports] are scattered amongst the commonalty, which, if they were true, no doubt the universal world would adjudge the doctrine and its promoters to deserve a thousand burnings and crucifixions. Who can wonder that public hatred is enflamed against the doctrine when belief is yielded to such most unjust accusations. Behold the cause through which all orders of men with one mind and breath, condemn us and our doctrine. Seized by this passion, they who occupy the seat of judgment pronounce, as sentence against us, the determinations pre-conceived, which they had brought from their own homes, and they think that they have duly performed their functions, if they order not a man to be carried to punishment unless convicted by his own confession, or by unshaken proofs. But of what crime stands he convicted? Why, (they reply) of holding that doctrine which is condemned. By what authority is it condemned? But this used to be the bulwark of a defendant—not to deny the holding of the doctrine itself, but to maintain it as being truth. Now, the opportunity even of murmuring is cut off.

Wherefore, victorious King, I do not unfairly

demand of you to undertake the entire cognizance of this cause, which hitherto has been handled in a turbulent manner, without any legal order, rather with ineffective turmoil, than with appropriate gravity, or in anywise debated. Neither think that I design mine own private defence with a view of accomplishing a safe return to my native country; which, although I pursue with that warm desire which becomes a man, yet, as things are at present, I lack without concern. But I now embrace the common cause of all pious men; and, therefore, the cause itself of Christ, which at this day is in every manner broken and trodden down in thy kingdom, and lieth as an object to be bemoaned; though this, indeed, hath been rather through the tyranny of certain Pharisees than with your consent. But how this may be it matters little. Truly it lieth in affliction. The impious have thus far gained their point, that Christ's truth, if it perish not, being routed and dispersed, yet certainly it lieth hidden as buried and unknown; and the poor Church is so utterly wasted by cruel slaughters, expelled by banishments, or so stricken through with threatenings and alarms, that it dare not even open its mouth; and at this very time they are thrusting

boldly, with their wonted madness and fierceness, against a wall already giving way, and pressing against the ruin which they have made. In the mean time, no one standeth forth to oppose his protection against such furious men. And if there be any who wish to appear specially to favour the truth, such give it as their opinion, that pardon should be shewn to the errors and the indiscretion of ignorant men. So speak good humoured men, calling "that" error and indiscretion which they know to be the most sure truth of God, and entitling those men ignorant whose cast of mind seems not to have been despicable before Christ, inasmuch as He hath thought them worthy of the mysteries of his heavenly wisdom. Thus all are ashamed of the Gospel.

But it will be your part, O most serene King, not to turn away either your ears or your mind from so just a defence, specially when so momentous a question is handled, viz:—how the safety of God's glory shall be built up in the earth—how the truth of God may retain its own dignity—how the kingdom of Christ may continue amongst us, sheltered and kept in good repair. The matter is worthy of your ears, worthy of your cognizance, worthy of

your tribunal, if so be this tone of thought constitutes a true king; that he acknowledges himself to be the minister of God in the ruling of his kingdom. Neither, in truth, doth he wield a royal function, but a robbery, who doth not so reign that he may serve to the glory of God. Besides, that monarch is deceived who looks to a continued prosperity of his kingdom which is not governed by the sceptre of God, *i. e.* by his Sacred Word, since that celestial oracle cannot fail which proclaims that, "The people fall into dissolution where prophesying hath ceased," or, "where there is no vision the people perisheth."—Proverbs xxix. 13.

Neither, O King, should a disdain of our humbleness withdraw you from this purpose. That we, indeed may be poor, sorry, and abject creatures, we ourselves are fain honestly to confess; before God, miserable sinners; before men, very despicable; the filth and cast off dregs (if you will) of the world, or anything even more vile in name, so that, as far as concerns matter of boasting before God, nought remains but his sole mercy, by which we are called to a hope of eternal salvation by no merit of our own; nor have we much to boast of before men excepting our own weakness, which amongst them

it is taken for a great shame to confess, even by a nod. But our doctrine must stand sublime above all the glory of this world, and unsubdued above all power, because it is not our own but the doctrine of the living God, and of his Christ, whom the Father hath appointed King, that he may rule from sea to sea, from the rivers even unto the ends of the earth. And so he must reign, that he may break to pieces the whole earth with its strength of iron and brass, with its splendour of gold and silver, smitten alone with the rod of his mouth,—yea, even as the potter's vessels,—after the manner that the prophets have foretold concerning the mightiness of the acts of his rule. Dan ii. 34. Isaiah xi. 4. Psalm ii. 9.

Certain of our foes reply, that we falsely pretend the Word of God, of which (as they say) we are very wicked corruptors. But that this is not only a malicious calumny, but remarkable shamelessness, you yourself will be enabled to judge, according to your discretion, when you read our confession of faith. Something here may be stated which may stir you up, or, at least, surely strew the way to its perusal, or even to its attentive study on your part. Paul, when he willed that all prophesying should be fashioned according to the analogy, or proportion of

faith, hath laid down the certain rule by which the interpretation of Scripture ought to be measured. Now, if our views are weighed by this standard, we have the victory. For what in a better, or more strict degree, harmonizes with the faith, than our acknowledgment that we are naked in regard of every virtue, that we may be clothed by God? that we are void of all good, that we may be filled by Him? that we are the servants of sin, that we may be made free by Him? blind, that we may receive light from Him? lame, that we may be made strait by Him? weak, that we may be supported by Him? that we take from ourselves every cause of boasting, that He may stand forth glorious, and that we may glory in him? Now when such, and similar arguments are stated by us, they interrupt us, and complain that we overthrow by such a method I know not what "a blind light of nature," fictitious preparations,* free-will, works meritorious of eternal salvation, together with their supererogations, because they will not endure that the entire renown and praise of wisdom, goodness, virtue, righteousness, should rest with God. We do not read that they

* Pre-existent tendencies in man to "good," which Calvin objects to, as detracting from the entireness of God's grace.

were reproved who drew too much from the fountain of living waters; on the other hand, they are heavily reproached who dig for themselves pits—broken pits which cannot hold water. Jer. ii. 13. Again, what is more in agreement with the faith than to promise to ourselves God as a favourable Father, where Christ is acknowledged a brother, and author of propitiation? Or than to expect all gladness and prosperity from Him, whose unutterable love towards us had grown to such a height that he spared not his own Son, that he might give him up for us? Or than to rest implicitly on a certain expectation of salvation and life eternal, where Christ is contemplated as given by the Father, in whom such treasures are hidden. On this point they arrest us, and cry out, that this confident certainty is not wanting in arrogance and presumption. But as we may presume nothing of ourselves, so we may presume all things of God; nor for any other reason are we divested of vain glory, than that we may learn to glory in God.

What more remains? Look, O King, through every portion of our cause, and judge us to be more wicked than any race of men in the world, unless you plainly shall discover that "for this we both labor and suffer reproach, because we place our

hope in the living God, because we believe this to be eternal life, that we know one true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." On account of this hope some of us are bound with chains; some whipped, led about as a laughing stock, proscribed, cruelly tortured, or only escaping by flight; all the brethren are pressed down by poverty, execrated with dreadful curses, *mangled* by abusive epithets, treated with all indignities. Now mark our enemies (I am speaking of the order of Priests, at whose will and choice men set in action every kind of enmity against us), and briefly consider, with me, the disposition by which they are urged. They willingly allow, both in themselves and others, an ignorance, contempt, and neglect of the true religion, which is handed down in the Scriptures, and which ought to be held sure amongst all men; and they think that it matters little what a man may believe, or may not believe, concerning God and Christ, provided that he surrender his whole mind with an unflinching (as they say) faith to the judgment of the Church. Neither doth it much affect them if it happen that the glory of God be polluted by open blasphemies, provided that a man doth not raise his finger against the primacy of the Apostolic

seat, and the dignity of holy Mother Church. Why, therefore, do they so sharply and cruelly fight in behalf of the Mass, Purgatory, Pilgrimages, and trifles of this kind, so that they deny piety to be secure without a most explicit (as I may say) faith in these points; whereas they cannot prove that ought of these things comes out of God's Word? Why so? Because their belly is their god,— a kitchen their religion; which things being swept away, it is their belief that they would not only be no Christians, but also no men. However, it may be that some [of the priestly order] swell themselves out after a gorgeous fashion, whilst others of them feed on slender crusts, yet all live by the same pot, which, without these warmings, would not only cool, but turn to ice. Therefore, in proportion as each of them is careful for his belly, so is he found to be a most energetic warrior for his faith. In short, all vigorously apply themselves to one point, either that they may retain their kingdom in safety, or their belly in abundance; but none present the least symptom of a genuine zeal.

Neither yet do they cease to attack our doctrine, and to slander and criminate it by all the names they can, in order to render it an object of hatred

and suspicion. They call it new, lately born, cavil at it as doubtful and uncertain; they demand by what miracles it is confirmed? they ask, whether it is right that it should prevail against the consent of so many holy fathers, and the usage of highest antiquity? they urge, either that we must admit *that* to be schismatical which stirreth up war against the Church, or that the Church itself must have lien dead during many ages in which no such thing [as our doctrine] hath been heard of. Lastly, they plead that there is no need of arguments, for the quality of our doctrine may be gathered from its fruits, inasmuch as it hath brought forth so vast a heap of sects, such divers kinds of seditions, so wide a licentiousness of immorality. Forsooth, it is very easy for them to utter scoffs against a forsaken cause before the credulous and unskilled vulgar; but were it granted to us in turn to speak, in good truth that bitter vehemence would cool down with which they with full mouth foam against us, with no less licence than impunity. First, whereas they call our doctrine new, they are sorely unjust to God, whose holy word deserves not to be accused of novelty. I doubt not that to them it is new, for to them Jesus Christ is new, and the Gospel is new; but those

who know the olden declaration of Paul, that "Jesus Christ died for our sins, and rose again for our justification," will detect nothing new in our doctrine. That this doctrine hath long lien unknown and buried, is the crime of man's impiety; now, however, when by the goodness of God it is restored to us, it ought to receive again its title of ancientness, at least by right of restoration to its past estate. Out of the same source of ignorance doth it arise that they hold our doctrine to be doubtful and uncertain. This is the very ignorance of which God complains by the mouth of his Prophet, Is. i. 3, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib," but his people knew not him. But let them mock after what fashion they please, at the uncertainty of it, yet if their own doctrine was to be sealed by the testimony and cost of their own lives and blood, it would soon be seen at what they valued it. Far other is our trust, which dreads neither the terrors of death, nor yet the very judgment seat of God. Whereas they require miracles of us, they do so unreasonably; for we coin no new Gospel, but hold fast the self-same Gospel, for confirming the truth of which all those miracles do serve which Christ and his Apostles at any time wrought. But

our opponents have, indeed, this peculiar advantage over us, that they are able to confirm their own faith by constant miracles even to the present day. Yea, but the wonders which they quote are rather calculated to stagger a mind otherwise well regulated; since they are either frivolous and absurd, or vain and lying; and yet although they be ever so prodigious, they ought not to be of any value against the word of God, since it is befitting that in every time and place the name of God should be glorified, whether by prodigies, or by the natural course of things. Perhaps this disguise would look better if Scripture did not admonish us as to the object and lawful aim of miracles. For the signs which followed the preaching of the Apostles were set forth to confirm the same, as Mark teacheth: Mark xvi. 20. Luke also saith, that the Lord did bear witness to the word of his grace, when signs and wonders were shewed by the hands of the Apostles: Acts xiv. 3. Like unto this speaks the Apostle to the Hebrews: ii. 4.—that when the Gospel was preached, salvation was confirmed by this, that the Lord bare witness to it with signs, wonders, and divers powers. Now these things which we hear to be sureties of the Gospel, shall we turn to

the destroying of the credit of the Gospel? Those wonders, which are designed only to set the seal to the truth, shall we apply them to the confirmation of lies? Hence, it is fair that the doctrine, which as the Evangelist saith, goeth before miracles, be first examined and tried. If it be approved, then it ought lawfully to take confirmation from miracles. This is a mark given by Christ that doctrine is honest; that it tend to the seeking of the glory of God, but not of men. John vii. 18; viii. 50. Since Christ asserts this to be the proof of doctrine, miraculous signs are wrongfully esteemed which are drawn to any other end than to shed a lustre on the name of God.

It also becomes us to bear in mind that Satan hath also his wonders, which, although they be juggling tricks rather than real powers, yet are such as may deceive the ignorant and unskilful. Magicians and enchanters have at all times made themselves conspicuous by miracles; astounding prodigies nourished idolatry, which yet do not approve to us that the superstition of the magician and of the idolater is lawful. With this battering ram, in old time, the Donatists (vide Appendix A.) did shake the simple minds of the multitude, for that they were

mighty in working miracles. We, in the present day, make the same reply to our adversaries which Augustin at that time made to the Donatists—"The Lord hath put us on our guard against these miracle-mongers when he foretold that false prophets should come, who, by false signs and divers prodigies, should lead into error the very elect, if it were possible." Matt. xxiv. 24. Paul hath advised, 2 Thess. ii. 9, that the kingdom of antichrist should be "with all power and signs, and lying wonders." But (reply our adversaries), these (our) miracles are wrought, not by idols, nor by impious men, neither by false prophets, but by saints;—as if we did not know this to be the artifice of Satan, to "transform himself into an angel of light." 2 Cor. xi. 14. The Egyptians, in former days, treated with sacrifices, and other divine honours, Jeremiah, who was buried in their land [vide Hieronymus's Preface on Jeremiah]. Did they not abuse the sacred prophet of God to idolatry? Yet by such a worshipping of his tomb they acquired this, that they thought a cure from the bite of serpents would be its recompense.

What shall we say then? but that this ever has been, and will be, the most just vengeance

of God, to send upon those who have received not the love of truth, strength of delusion, that they may believe lying. Miracles are by no means wanting to us, and these free from doubt, and not open to cavils. As for the miracles which our opponents put forth, they are mere illusions of Satan, since they lead away the people from the true worshipping of their God to vanity. Moreover [our opponents] do, with slanderous aim, set the Fathers against us (by this word I mean the ancient Fathers, and the writers of the yet better age); pretending that the suffrages of the Fathers were in favour of their impiety. If the dispute were to be settled by the authority of the Fathers, the better part of the victory (to speak even most modestly) would incline to our side. But though many things very excellent and wise may have been written by these Fathers, yet, in some things "that" hath happened to them which is wont to befall man, these, their pious sons, forsooth, with that readiness of wit, judgment, and mind, which belongs to them, worship only their faults and mistakes; as to that which is well said, they either do not take note of it, or they feign not to know it, or they corrupt it, so as one may say, it

has been specially their care in gold to gather dung. Then they overwhelm us with unjust clamor, as if we despised, or stood out against the Fathers. So far are we from despising them, that if it were to my present purpose, no employment would better please me than to prove, by their consenting voices, the greater part of what I this day assert. But we so read their writings, as to remember always, that "all" things are ours, to be our servants, not our masters; that we are Christ's alone, to whom, in all respects, without exception, obedience must be rendered. 1 Cor. iii. 21. The man who holds not this distinction will have nothing "settled" in religion; forasmuch as those holy men have been ignorant of many things; ofttimes they strive one with another, sometimes they are at variance with themselves.

But (say our antagonists) we are not without reason advised by Solomon, not to pass the ancient boundaries which our Fathers have set. Prov. xxii. 28. But the same rule holds not good for the limits of a field and for the obedience of faith, which ought to be so ordered, that "it forget her own people and her Father's house." Psalm xlv. 10. But since they so greatly delight in figurative com-

ment, why do they not interpret the Apostles, rather than any others to be the Fathers, whose prescribed bounds it is not lawful to pluck up? For thus did Hieronymus expound it, whose words they have registered amongst their canons. But if they wish that the bounds laid down as they understand of the Fathers, should be fixed, why do they themselves, as often as it suits their purpose, so licentiously pass them? For it was one of the Fathers (Appendix B) who said, "Our God neither doth eat nor drink," therefore he hath no need of cups or platters. Another Father (Appendix C) saith, "Sacred things desire not gold, neither do things delight in gold, which are not bought with gold." They, therefore, pass the limit, when in sacred things they take so great pleasure in gold, silver, marble, precious stones, silken stuffs, and think that God is not duly worshipped, unless there be a general flood of choice splendour, or rather of unreasonable luxury. It was a Father* who said, that he himself eat flesh freely on that day when others abstained, for this cause—because he was a Christian. They, therefore, pass the bound when they accurse the soul of that man who tasteth flesh during Lent. They

* Ambr. lib. 2. de off c. 28.

were Fathers, one* of whom saith, "A monk who worketh not with his own hands is accounted on a par with a violent man, or, if the other word be preferred, with a thief." Another Father† saith, "It is not allowable for monks to live upon the goods of others, although they may be assiduous in meditation, prayer, and studies." This bound they passed when they pampered, at the expense of others, lazy monks‡ * * * * * in places of licentious resort, to be filled with other men's substance. A Father§ it was who said, that it was an abomination of horror to see a figure of Christ, or of any saint, painted in the temples of Christians. Nor is this declared by the voice of one man, but it is even the decree of an Ecclesiastical Council,‖ that that which is worshipped be not painted on walls. Very far are they from restraining themselves within these bounds, when they have no corner void of images.

* Spiridion trip. hist., lib. 1, cap. 10.

† Aug. de oper. mon. c. 17.

‡ The conclusion of the sentence omitted as "gross" invective, and irrelevant to the argument.

§ Epiph.

‖ Con. Eleber c. 36.

Another Father* hath advised that when we have performed the duty of humanity towards the dead in their burial, we should suffer them to be at rest. They burst through this limit when they strike into us a perpetual anxiety for the departed. He was one of the Fathers,† who testifies that the substance of bread and wine doth so remain and not cease to be in the Eucharist, just as the substance and nature of man doth continue in the Lord Christ, joined with the divine [nature]. They, therefore, overstep this rule, who feign that the substance of wine and bread doth cease to be, at the recital of the words of the Lord, that it may be transubstantiated into his body and blood. They were the Fathers,‡ who, as they exhibited only one Eucharist to the whole Church, so they drave away from it flagitious and wicked men, and uttered heavy condemnation against all those who, being present, did not communicate. How far off have our adversaries removed these boundaries, when they fill not the temples only, but even private mansions, with "masses," and admit any persons to behold them,

* Ambrose de Abra: lib. 1, cap. 9.

† Gelasius Papa in Concil: Rom.

‡ Chrysostom in 1. cap. Eph. Calixt. Papa de consecr. dist. 2.

the more willingly him who payeth the best, no matter how impure and wicked. They invite no one to faith in Christ, and a faithful communion of the Sacraments, but rather sell their own work for the grace and merit of Christ. Fathers* they were, one of whom decreed that they were wholly to be debarred from the use of the Holy Supper of the Lord, who, content with partaking of it in one kind abstained from the other. And the other Father† earnestly maintained that the blood of their own Lord is not to be refused to a Christian people, who are commanded to shed their own blood, in confessing Him. Our adversaries have taken away these boundaries when they command, by an inviolable law, the self-same thing which the one Father punished by excommunication, and the other disproved with strong reason. A Father‡ was he who maintained it to be rashness to determine anything of a doubtful matter on either side, without clear and evident testimony of scripture. This limit they have forgotten when they have ordained so many constitutions, so many canons, so many judicial

* Gelasius can. Comperimus de cons. dist. 2.

† Cyprian Epis. 2, lib. 1, de lapsis.

‡ August. lib. 2—de pec. mer. c. ult.

determinations, without any Word of God. A Father* was he who reproached Montanus with this heresy amongst others, that he first imposed laws of fasting. This bound our adversaries widely exceeded when they ordained, by very stringent laws, days of fasting. A Father† was he who denied that wedlock was to be forbidden to the ministers of the Church, who pronounced marriage undefiled to be chastity, and they were Fathers who consented to his authority. Our opponents have gone far out of these bounds when they have rigidly enjoined unmarried life to their sacrificers. A Father‡ was he who judged that Christ alone should be heard, of whom it is said "Hear him:" nor ought it to be a matter of moment what others before our time have said or done, but what Christ (who is first of all) hath commanded. This bound they appoint not to themselves, nor suffer it to be appointed to others, when they set over themselves, and over others, any other master rather than Christ. A Father § was he who affirmed that the Church ought not to put

* Apol. ecclesiast. lib. 5, cap. 12.

† Paphnu. trip. hist. lib. 2, cap. 14.

‡ Cyprian Epist. 2, lib. 2.

§ Augustin cap. 2, contra Crescen. grammat.

itself before Christ, because he always judged truly, but ecclesiastical judges, as men, for the most part may be deceived. Breaking through this bound also, they hesitate not to assert that the whole authority of Scripture depends on the judgment of the Church. All the Fathers have, with one heart, accursed, and with one mouth pronounced it abominable, that the Holy Word of God should be polluted by the subtleties of sophists, and entangled in the brawlings of logicians. Do our opponents keep within these boundaries when they are contriving, during a whole life, nothing else than to involve and encumber the simplicity of Scripture with interminable disputes, and more than sophistical wranglings, so that, if the Fathers were now raised to life again, and should hear such an art of brawling which they call "speculative theology," they would believe anything sooner than that the disputation was concerning God's word. But my address, O King, would extend itself beyond all due space, if I should rehearse how wantonly they shake off the yoke of the Fathers, of whom they wish to seem the obedient sons. Months and years would in truth fail me; and yet so abandoned and desperate is the shamelessness of our antago-

nists, that they dare to chide us on the ground that we do not hesitate to pass over the ancient boundaries.

But now, whereas, they call us "to custom" they prevail nothing. For we should be most unjustly dealt with, if we be driven to yield to custom. Truly, if the judgments of mankind were right, custom should be solicited from the good. But it too often happens that the reverse of this is the fact; for that which is seen to be done of the many, by and by, holdeth the right of a custom. Scarcely at any time hath man's state been in so happy a case, that the better things pleased the greater number. Therefore it is, that in general, universal error is born of the peculiar vices of the many, or rather, there is a common agreement of vices, which agreement, these good men wish to stand in the position of a law. Those who have eyes, perceive that not one sea, only, of evils hath overflowed, but that many noisome pestilences have invaded the world; that all things run headlong into ruin, so that either the affairs of men must be utterly despaired of, or we must lay hand unto, or rather, use violence upon so great evils. The remedy is driven away, for no other reason than that we have now long

time accustomed ourselves to evils. But be it that public error have place in matters of common weal; yet, in the kingdom of God, His eternal truth alone is to be heard and regarded; to which, by no series of years, by no usage, by no conspired compact, can ought be prescribed. Thus Isaiah, in ancient days, taught the elect of God, that they should not say "confederacy," to all which the people called "confederacy;" that is, that the elect should not join their breath with the wicked, "agreeing together" of the generality, that they should not fear, and dread what they feared, and dreaded; but rather that they should sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and that He should be their fear and dread. Isaiah viii. 12.

Now, then, let our adversaries object against us, if they please, past ages and present practices. If we shall have sanctified the Lord of Hosts, we shall not be greatly alarmed. For, whether it be that many ages have consented to like ungodliness, He is strong who can execute vengeance on the third and fourth generation; or, whether the whole world is confederate together, in the same wickedness, He hath taught us, by proof, the end of those who offend with the multitude, when He destroyed the

whole race of mankind by a deluge, Noah being preserved, together with a small household of few persons, who, by his faith, being but one man, should condemn the world. Finally, evil custom is nothing less than a sort of public pestilence, in which they do not the less perish who fall in company of a multitude. Moreover, it became them to ponder well the remarks of Cyprian,* viz., that those who ignorantly err, although they cannot wholly clear themselves of blame, yet seem, in some measure excusable. But those who obstinately refuse the truth offered by the grace of God, have nothing to pretend for their excuse. As to their double-horned argument, they do not press us so hardly with it as to oblige us to confess that either the Church hath for some time lien dead, or that we, at the present hour, are waging a controversy with the Church. Truly, the Church of Christ hath lived, and shall live so long as Christ shall reign at the right hand of the Father, by whose hand it is supported, by whose guardianship it is defended, by whose power it retaineth security. He will perform, without doubt, what he hath once promised, viz., that he will be present with His

* Epist. 3. 51-2, and in Epist. ad Julian de heret Baptiz.

own, even unto the end of the world. Against that Church we have now no war at all; since we worship and adore with one consent, in common with the whole people of the faithful, one God and Christ the Lord; like as at all times he hath been worshipped by all the godly. But our opponents themselves wander not a little way from the truth, when they acknowledge no church but what they see with the eye present, and strive to compass about with those bounds in which it is in nowise enclosed.

On these points hangeth our controversy:—first, that they affirm that the form of the Church is always appearing, and to be seen; then, that they set that form in the see of the Church of Rome, and in the order of their prelates. On the other hand we assert, both that the Church may consist of no appearing form, and that the form itself is not contained in that outward splendour which they foolishly admire, but in a very different mark, viz., the pure preaching of God's Word, and the right administration of the Sacraments. They are in a rage unless the Church may always be pointed out with a finger; but how often did it happen in the history of the Jews that the Church was so disfi-

gured that there appeared no form at all? What form of the Church do we think could have shone forth, when Elijah bewailed that he alone was left? 1 Kings xix. 14. For how long since the advent of Christ, hath it lien hidden, and without form? How, since that time, hath it been so overwhelmed with wars, seditions, heresies, that it hath in no respect shone forth? If they had lived at that time would they have believed that there was any Church? but it was said to Elijah, that there were seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee before Baal. Neither ought it to be a matter of doubt to us, but that Christ hath always reigned in the earth since he ascended into Heaven; but if the pious had, at that time, sought with their eyes any discernable form, would they not have straightway been discouraged? And truly, Hilary* already in his day considered it as a leading vice that men, being occupied with a foolish admiration of the dignity of bishops, did not perceive a deadly pestilence lurking hid under that mask. Hilary speaks thus—"One thing I warn you, beware of Antichrist, for ye are ill taken with the love of walls. Ye do wrongly venerate the Church of God in edi-

* Hil. Contra Auxentium.

fices and structures; under them ye do wrongly thrust in the name of peace. Is it doubtful that Antichrist shall sit in them? More safe to me are mountains, woods, lakes, prisons, hollow places of the earth, for in them the Prophets when abiding, or cast, did prophesy."

But what doth the world at the present hour so much admire in its mitred bishops, but that it reckons them to be holy prelates of religion, whom it seeth to be presiding over great cities.* Away with such stupid admiration! Let us rather leave this to the Lord, forasmuch as he alone knoweth who are his, and sometimes may take away out of man's sight the outward discernment of his Church; that is, I admit, an horrible vengeance of God upon the earth, but if the impiety of man so deserves, why strive we to withstand the just vengeance of God? In like manner hath God, in past ages, avenged himself upon the ingratitude of men; for, inasmuch as they would not obey his truth, and had quenched his light, God suffered them, being blinded in understanding, to be mocked with absurd lies, and to be drowned in deep darkness, so that no face of the

* Calvin objects not to bishops as ruling, but as constituting the Church.

true Church was to be seen; yet, in the meanwhile, he preserved from destruction his own, who were scattered abroad, and were hidden in the midst of error and darkness; nor is this strange, for he knoweth how to save, both in the very confusion of Babylon and in the flame of the fiery furnace. And, whereas they "will" the form of the Church to be judged by I know not what vain pompous shew, how dangerous that is I will point out, rather than relate in detail, lest I should draw out my address into infinite length.

The Pope (say they), who occupies the Apostolic seat, and the chief priests, who are anointed and consecrated by him, at least that they be adorned with fillets and croziers, represent the Church, and ought to be taken for the Church; therefore they cannot err. How so? Because they are pastors of the Church, and consecrated to the Lord. But (I answer), were not Aaron and the other rulers of Israel also pastors? But Aaron and his sons, "appointed priests," did err when they made the the calf. Ex. xxxii. 4. According to this reasoning, why should not those four hundred prophets, who spake "falsely" to Ahab, have represented the Church? 1 Kings, xxii. But the Church was on

the side of Micaiah, being, indeed, one man, and despised, but out of whose mouth came truth. Did not Prophets bear in resemblance both the name and face of the Church, when, with one assault, they rose up against Jeremiah, and boasted, with threats, that it was not possible that the law should perish from the priest, counsel from the wise man, the word from the prophet? Jeremiah xviii. 18. Against the whole company of the Prophets is Jeremiah sent, "alone," to declare from the Lord, that it should come to pass; that the law should perish from the Priest, counsel from the wise man, the word from the prophet. Did not such a glittering shew shine forth in that council which the Chief-Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees assembled to take counsel for the killing of Christ? Let our opponents go now, and stick to that outward mask, that they may make Christ and all the prophets of God schismatics; or again, let them make the ministers of Satan the instruments of the Holy Spirit. But if our adversaries do speak as they think, let them faithfully answer me, in what nation, or in what place, they think the Church remained, from the time when Eugenius was thrust down, and deprived of the Papacy by a decree of the Council of

Basil (Appendix D.), and Amedæus substituted in his place? They cannot, though they would burst for it, deny, that the Council, as far as concerns external solemnities, was lawful, and summoned, not by one Pontiff only, but by two. Eugenius was there condemned of schism, rebellion, contumacy, together with the entire herd of Cardinals and Bishops, who, together with him, had practised to dissolve the Council, yet, afterwards being lifted up by the favor of princes, Eugenius recovered the Papacy safe again. That election of Amedæus which had been duly carried out by the awardment of a general and most holy synod, went off in smoke; except that Amedæus was pacified with a cardinal's hat, as a barking dog is quieted by a piece of meat being thrown to it. From the bosom of those schismatics, rebels, and obstinate men, issued the after progeny of Popes, Cardinals, Bishops, Abbots, Presbyters. Here our opponents, being caught, must of necessity come to a stand; for to which party will they grant the name of the Church? Will they deny that the council at Basil was a general one, to which nothing was wanting as to outward dignity, viz., that it was solemnly bidden by two diplomas [bulls], consecrated by the Legate of the Roman see, who

presided, constructed in all points with order, and that it continued to the last to maintain the same dignity? On the other hand, will our opponents admit that Eugenius was a schismatic, with all his troop, from whom they all are sanctified? Either, therefore, let them define, after some other manner, the form of the Church, or, as many of them as they are, they will be accounted by us as schismatics, who, knowingly and wilfully, receive ordination from heretics. But if it had never before been discovered that the Church is not bound to outward pomps, they themselves may be to us a lengthy proof, who under the goodly title of the Church, have, for so long a time, vaunted themselves to the world, whilst, however, they were destructive pests of the Church. As to their manners, I say nothing, and am silent as to those tragic deeds so abounding in their entire lives, since they declare themselves to be the Pharisees who are to be heard, not imitated. Yea, this very doctrine itself, in which they assert this to be their due, because "they are the Church," hath been the deadly slaughter-house of souls, the firebrand, ruin, and subversion of the Church; a fact which, O King, you would clearly perceive, in sparing somewhat of your leisure to read our writings.

Lastly, our adversaries act with little candour, when they spitefully relate what turbulence, tumults, and contention, the preaching of our doctrine hath brought in its train, and the fruit it now bears in many; for the blame of these evils is unjustly conveyed to our doctrine, which ought rather to have been put to the account of the malice of Satan. For it is as it were a special property of the divine word, that when it doth rise up, Satan never remaineth quiet and asleep. This is its most sure and pre-eminently trusty token, by which it is distinguished from false doctrines, which make ready progress, whilst they are received with willing ears, and are listened to by an applauding world. So, during some ages, in which all things were plunged in deep darkness, almost all mankind were a jest and sport to the prince of this world, who like a certain Sardanapalus had his sloth, and his delights, in the midst of profound peace; for what did he but laugh, and disport himself in the tranquil tenure of his kingdom? But when light shining from heaven, in some degree dispersed the darkness,—when "That strong man," sorely troubled, and disquieted his kingdom,—then began he to shake off his wonted torpor, and in haste to lay hold of his weapons: first he stirred

up the hand of man, by which he might violently oppress the truth beginning to shine forth. Not succeeding thus, he turned to his treacheries, and excited those differences and doctrinal disputes, through the agency of the Catabaptists (App. E.), and other monstrous doings of vile fellows, in order that he might first obscure, and at length, extinguish the truth. At the present hour he continues to assail it by either engine of attack, forasmuch as his endeavour is to pluck up that good seed by the force and hand of man, and he strives to cover it with his tares (as far as he can), that it may neither grow, nor yield fruit. This is, however, done in vain, if we hear the Lord's warning, who hath long before disclosed to us the arts of Satan, in order that he might not catch us off our guard, and hath armed us with sufficient defence against all his engines. But to lay upon the Word of God the odium of seditions, which are the work of evil and rebellious men, or of the sects which impostors on the other hand stir up,—how great malice is this? Yet this example is not new. Elijah was asked, whether it was not he that troubled Israel. 1 Kings xviii. 17, 18. Christ was accounted of the Jews a seditious man. A charge of popular commotion

was fastened upon the Apostles. What other thing do they who impute to us, at the present hour, all the turbulency, mobs, and wranglings, which bubble up amongst us? Elijah hath taught us how to reply to such, viz., that we are not they who scatter abroad errors, or provoke tumults, but they themselves who struggle against God's power. But as that one thing is enough to beat back their rashness, so must we encounter the weakness of others who, not unfrequently, are moved by such offences, and being dismayed, waver. But let them, that they may not faint with this dismaying, and be cast down from their degree, know that the Apostles in their day experienced the same that cometh now within our experience. There were ignorant and unstable men then, who wrested what had been written by Paul under divine inspiration to their own destruction (as saith Peter) 2 Peter iii. 16. There were despisers of God, who, when they heard "sin abounded, to the end that grace might more abound," Rom. vi. 1, 14, 15, by and by objected—we will continue in sin, that grace may abound. When they heard that the faithful were not under the law, but under Christ, forthwith they chirped—we will sin, because we are not under the law, but

under grace. Some there were who accused the Apostle of persuading to vice. Many false apostles covertly entered in to destroy the churches which he had founded. Philippians i. 15. Some preached the Gospel through envy and contention, and not sincerely, yea, maliciously, thinking to add more affliction to his bonds. In any place the advance of the Gospel was not great. All were seeking after their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. Some went backwards, as dogs to their vomit, and like swine to their wallowing place of mire. The generality carried the liberty of the Spirit to carnal licence. Many brethren crept in unawares, from whom afterwards dangers impended on the godly. Amongst the brethren themselves were divers controversies stirred up. What should the Apostles have done in this case? Should they have dissembled for the time being? should they have given over and forsaken the Gospel, which they saw to be the seed plot of so many disputes, the matter of so many dangers, the occasion of so many offences? No, this came into the minds of the Apostles in such straits, that Christ is the stone of stumbling and rock of offence, set for the fall and rising again of many, and as a sign which

should be spoken against. Armed with this confidence they boldly went forward through every hazard of turbulence, or offences. We ought also to be supported by the like thought, since Paul testifies that this peculiar character ever belongs to the Gospel, that it is "the savour of death unto death in those who perish," although it was ordained for this use, to be the savour of life unto life, and the power of God to the salvation of the faithful, which we should surely experience if we did not, by our ingratitude, corrupt this so special a benefit of God, and convert to our own destruction that which ought to be the only defence of our safety. 2 Cor. ii. 16.

But I again address you, O King. Let not those vain impeachments move you, by which our adversaries are striving to strike alarm into your mind, saying, that in this new Gospel, as they call it, nothing is coveted and sought but an occasion of seditions, and an impunity in all vices. For our God is not the author of division, but of peace; and the Son of God is not the minister of sin, who came to destroy the works of the devil. We, on our part, are undeservedly accused of desires of which we have never given any or the least ground of sus-

picion. We, forsooth, are plotting the subversion of kingdoms, from whose mouth no factious expressions have ever been heard, and whose lives are known to have been simple, and uniformly quiet, whilst we lived under your rule. Even now, that we are banished from our homes, we cease not to pray for all happy results to yourself and your kingdom. We, forsooth, are seeking after a lustfulness of vice, exempt from all penalty, in whose manners, although many points admit of censure, yet is there nought that deserves such excessive "outbraving" of us; neither have we, by God's grace, with so ill success profited in the Gospel, but that our lives may afford an example, to those who disparage us, of chastity, benignity, mercy, continence, patience, modesty, or of any other virtue. Truly, it is plain from the thing itself, that we do in sincerity fear and worship God, since we are seeking that God's name be hallowed by our death, as well as by our life. Envy itself is driven to give its witness of the innocence and civic integrity of some of us, in whom that alone was punished by death, which ought to be placed to their special renown. But if there be any who, under the pretext of the Gospel, do stir up tumults (men of this

character have not hitherto been detected in your kingdom),—if any make the freedom of the grace of God an excuse for licence in vice (very many such have I known),—there are laws and legal penalties by which they may be severely restrained, according to their deservings; only let not the Gospel of God, in the mean while, be of ill repute through the wickedness of evil men.

Thus you have, O King, the venemous injustice of slanderers largely enough declared, that you may not, with too credulous an ear, stoop to their impeachments. I fear, indeed, that I have said too much, since this address is advancing to the size almost of a regular apology, in which I purposed, not to compose a defence, indeed, but only to propitiate your mind aforehand to hear the pleading itself of our cause; which mind, though estranged, and turned away from us, nay, I add, inflamed [against us]; yet the favour of which we trust to be able to recover if you shall once have read, in a placid and composed temper, this our confession, which we wish to be instead of a defence of us to your Majesty.

But if the whispers of the malevolent do so possess your ears, that there is no place for the

arraigned to speak for themselves, and those outrageous furies still, under your connivance, do exercise cruelty with bonds, scourges, tortures, cuttings, and fire, we, like sheep appointed to the slaughter, shall be reduced to every extremity; yet so that we shall possess our souls in our patience, and await the strong hand of the Lord, which, without doubt will come in time, and stretch forth itself armed, both to deliver the poor out of affliction, and to take vengeance on the despisers who now triumph with so great assuredness.

May the Lord, the King of Kings, stablish your throne with righteousness, and your seat with equity, O Most Illustrious King.

Basil, Calends of August,
Anno Domini 1536.

ONE HUNDRED

Aphorisms of John Calvin.

ONE HUNDRED

Aphorisms of John Calvin.

1. The true wisdom of man is situate in the knowledge of God, the Creator, and Redeemer.

2. This knowledge is implanted in us naturally; and its result ought to be the worship of God, correctly ordered, or a reverence of Deity conjoined with fear and love.

3. But this seed is corrupted by ignorance; whence arises a superstitious worship: and by wickedness; whence proceed a slavish fear, and a hatred of Deity.

4. The knowledge of Deity is procured also from other sources, viz., from the workmanship of the universe, and from the Sacred Scriptures.

5. The workmanship of the universe teacheth, of what sort is the goodness, virtue, justice, wisdom

of God, in creating things of heaven and of earth, and in preserving them by a government ordinary and extraordinary, in which his Providence clearly becometh known. The same workmanship teacheth us the degree of our indigence, that we may learn to place our trust in the goodness, power, and wisdom of God; to obey his commandments, to make him our refuge in adversities, to refer to him what endowments we have, and to accept them with thanksgiving.

6. God the Creator is known also from the sacred Scriptures, the essential qualities of which are to be considered, viz., that they are true, and have issued from the Holy Spirit; facts which are proved by the witnessing of the Holy Spirit, by the practical force and ancientness of the Scriptures, by the sureness of Prophecy, by the wondrous preservation of the Law, by the calling and writings of Apostles, by the assent of the Church, by the constancy of Martyrs. Whence it is manifest that those fanatics overthrow all the principles of piety who, setting less by the Scriptures, fly over to "revelations."

7. It is to be considered what the Scriptures teach, viz., what is the nature of God in itself, and in the creation and administration of things.

8. The nature of God is Infinite, Invisible, Eternal, Omnipotent: hence it follows, that, they who assign a visible form to God, are in error. The nature of God is also of one essence, in which are Three Persons, of the Father, of the Son, of the Holy Spirit.

9. In creation of things we are to consider specially, heavenly, and spiritual subsistencies; *i. e.* 1st, Angels, some of whom are good, and the guardians of the pious; others, evil, not as created such, but as corrupted: 2ndly, Terrestrial existencies, particularly man, whose perfection shineth out in his soul and body.

10. The nature of God manifests itself in the administration of things, after a twofold manner. There is a catholic administration, by which God governs all creatures, in reference to the quality, which he bountifully dispensed to each at its creation.

11. There is also a special administration, which is noticed in the purport of contingencies, so that, if an individual be the subject of adversity or prosperity, it is his duty to ascribe the same wholly to God. Also, in the order of things which act by reason of an established law of nature, in which

things, however there is naturally set a character peculiar to each, yet they exercise not their own native force, except as far as they are guided by the present hand of God.

12. The divine administration is to be considered also in the system of time, past and future. Of the past, that we may know that all things fall out according to the dispensation of God, working either through ordinary, or without ordinary, or against ordinary [means]. So that, let whatsoever happen, it will fall out to the pious for good, and to the ungodly for evil. Of the future it teaches, what is the proper scope of human deliberation, and what use may be made of lawful things, yet so that Providence, on which we repose, may be invested with its own means.

13. Lastly, from the order to be considered, of the fruits which the pious collect from the same. For we know with certainty, 1. That the whole human race, and specially his own Church, doth engage the care of God. 2. That God doth, by his own nod, rule all things, and govern them by his own wisdom. 3. That God hath the power of doing good sufficiently ample, because in his hand are heaven and earth; all creation is devoted in

submission to him; the pious are at rest under his protection, and the power of infernal beings is held in restraint by his authority. Nothing doth happen by chance, although causes may be hidden, but by the will of God, and this as well being secret, we cannot scrutinize, but reverently adore, as pronounced in the Law, and in the Gospel.

Aphorisms of John Calvin.

BOOK THE SECOND.

14. The knowledge of God the Redeemer is collected from the fall of man, and from the material cause of redemption.

15. In the fall of man it is right to consider his duty, and his capacity.

16. He was created after the image of God, *i.e.*, he partook of wisdom, justice, divine sanctity, and therefore, being perfect in soul and body, he was a debtor to observe entirely the commandments of God.

17. The immediate causes of the fall were—Satan, the serpent, Eve, the forbidden fruit. The remote causes were—infidelity, ambition, ingratitude, contumacy. Hence followed the blotting out of the image of God in man, who became unfaithful, unrighteous, obnoxious to death.

18. Man's capability, as well in relation to his soul, as to his body, must next be considered. The perception of his soul in divine things, *i. e.*, in the recognition, and true worship of God, is blinder than that of a mole. He neither is able to devise, nor to execute, good works. In human affairs, as, for instance, in the arts liberal, or mechanics, man's understanding is, in a great degree, dimsighted and changeable; but his will, as far as it concerns itself with things divine, desires only that which is evil, and as to inferior human matters, it is inconstant, wandering, and not altogether possessed of its own authority.*

19. The body of man pursueth the corrupt appetites of the soul, and is subject to many infirmities, and finally to death.

20. Hence it follows that, for lost man, redemption must be sought in Christ, the Mediator; because the first adoption of an elect people, the preservation of the Church, its restoration after dispersions, its liberation from perils, the hope of the pious, always were dependent on the grace of a Mediator. Therefore was the law given, which should hold the minds [of men] in suspense until

* Nec omnino sui juris.

the advent of Christ, a fact which is evident from the remembrance of the gratuitous covenant, oft-times rehearsed, from its ceremonies, sacrificings, cleansings, from the sequel of adoption, from the right of the priesthood.

21. The material cause of redemption is Christ, in whom three points are to be considered: 1. After what manner he may be set forth before men. 2. How he may be received. 3. How men may be retained in his society [communion].

22. Christ is set forth before man through the law and the gospel.

23. The law is of a threefold nature; ceremonial, judicial, moral. The use of the ceremonial law is abolished, but its result is perpetual. The judicial, or civil law, was peculiar to the jews, and hath been taken away; but the universal principles of equity, described in the moral law, do continue. This moral law, which appertains to the nurture and preservation of piety and justice, is perpetual, and is convenient for all mankind.

24. The use of the moral law is threefold. First, it points out our impotency, iniquity, condemnation; not that we may despair, but that we may have recourse to Christ. Secondly, that they who

are unmoved by promises may be restrained by the terror of threatenings. Thirdly, that we may know what is the will of God; that we may meditate upon it unto obedience, that our minds may be confirmed as to this point, that we may be withdrawn from slipperiness.

25. The substance of the law is contained in its preamble, and in the two tables. In the preamble is notified: 1. The power of God, that he might bind fast the people by the necessity of obedience. 2. The promise of grace, by which he professes himself God of the Church. 3. A benefit, by which God convicts the Jews of ingratitude unless they respond to his benignity.

26. The first table, which relates to the worship of God, is perfect in four precepts.

27. The intent of the first ordinance, is, that God alone should have pre-eminence in the sight of his people; therefore, to God alone do we owe adoration, affiance, offerings of prayer, thanksgivings.

28. The purport of the second precept is, that God willeth not that his worship be profaned by a superstitious ritual. The commandment is two-fold. One part restrains over freedom on our part, so that we may not subject the Deity to the perception of

sense, neither represent Him by any form. The other part forbids that we worship any images under pretext of religion, therefore it puts forth the power of God, which he will not suffer to be despised; his jealousy also, because he will admit no fellow; his retaliation upon children's children; his mercy to the worshippers of His Majesty.

29. The third ordinance commands three things. 1. That every conception of mind, or utterance of tongue, should have respect to the majesty of God. 2. That we do not rashly abuse his Holy Word, and sacred mysteries, for ambitious or covetous ends. 3. That we reproach not God's works, but proclaim them with praises of his wisdom, power, goodness, justice. Unto all these is opposed that triple profanation of God's name by perjury, unnecessary swearing, as well by idolatry, namely, when in God's place we substitute saints, or animate and inanimate creatures.

30. The end of the fourth precept is, that we, being dead as to our proper affections, and daily works, should meditate on God's kingdom. Three considerations hence arise:—1. A spiritual rest, when the faithful are at leisure from their usual works, that God may work in them. 2. That there

may be a stated day for calling upon the name of God, hearing his word, and the performance of sacred ceremonies. 3. That servants may have some relaxation from work.

31. The latter table contains the six following laws as to the duties of loving kindness towards our neighbour. The fifth precept purports, since an observance of God's own method is pleasing to him, it follows that degrees of rank ordained by him are inviolable. It is, therefore, forbidden us to detract from the dignity of superiors, either by contempt, contumacy, or ingratitude; yea, rather, we should treat them with reverence, obedience, gratitude.

32. The sixth precept purports, that, as God hath bound together the race of mankind by a certain oneness, so the general safety is, as a duty, committed to each individual; whence it follows that violence is forbidden to each separately, and benevolence is commanded.

33. The end of the seventh precept is this, that, because God loveth purity, it is a duty that all uncleanness should be put away from us; therefore wantonness, whether in thought, word, or deed, is forbidden by him.

34. The intent of the eighth precept is, that inasmuch as injustice is abomination before God, he willeth that every one should receive his own. Now, men defraud through violence, malicious imposture, craft, enticements, and other means.

35. The ninth precept purports on this wise. Since God, who is truth, must abhor lying, he forbiddeth calumnies and false impeachments, by which the good name of a neighbour suffers injury: also, false statements, through which any one is depressed as to his temporal estate. On the other hand, God requires that, by maintenance of truth, every individual amongst us should protect the entireness of his neighbour's reputation and property.

36. The tenth commandment purports that, inasmuch as it is God's will that the whole soul be possessed by the affection "Love," therefore, all covetousness, which is an adversary of loving-kindness, must be dislodged from the mind; consequently, every kind of longing which inclineth towards the injury of another is forbidden.

37. It has been said by us, that Christ is exhibited to us through the Gospel. First of all the accordance of the doctrine of the Gospel, or the New Testament, with the Old Testament, is shewn

for the following reasons. 1. Because the same hope of immortality may be, and shall have been, to pious men, under either covenant. This same covenant is established, not on men's works, but on God's mercy. There is the same Mediator between God and man, Christ.

38. Hence a distinction between either covenant is exhibited, which consists of five particulars. 1. Under the Law the heavenly inheritance was exhibited to view under earthly things ; under the Gospel our minds are directed towards it at once. 2. The Old Covenant set forth, under figures, only a representation, the truth itself being wanting; the New Covenant displays the truth actually present. 3. The Old was, by reason of the Law, a ministration of condemnation and death ; the New was a method of justice and of life. 4. The Old was a state of bondage, which tended to beget fear in the mind; the New, a system of liberty, which can lift up the mind unto affiance. 5. The word was destined for the Jews only ; now it is preached to all nations.

39. The main end of the Gospel doctrine is to teach—1. Of what manner of nature Christ is. 2. For what purpose he is sent. 3. How he fulfilled the respective parts of redemption.

40. Christ is God and Man. God, that he might grant, as a largess to his own, righteousness, sanctification, redemption. Man, because he was to liquidate the debt of man.

41. Christ was sent to execute a function—1. Of a Prophet, in preaching truth, fulfilling prophecy, in doing and teaching the will of God. 2. Of a King, in governing the whole church, and every member of the same, and in defending his people from every harm from enemies. 3. Of a Priest, in offering his own body for sins, in reconciling God to us by his obedience, in always interceding for his own with prayers to God the Father.

42. Christ hath fulfilled all the parts of a Redeemer, in dying for our sins, rising again for our justification, opening the heavens to us through his ascension, sitting at the right hand of the Father, whence he is to come to judge the quick and the dead. Therefore he hath well deserved for us the grace and salvation of God.

Aphorisms of John Calvin.

BOOK THE THIRD.

43. We receive Christ the Redeemer by the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, who unites us with Christ; therefore he is called the Spirit of sanctification and adoption, the earnest and seal of our salvation; also water, oil, a fountain, fire, the hand of God.

44. Faith is the hand of the soul, which, by the same power of the Holy Spirit, takes hold of Christ, offered by the Gospel.

45. It is the ordinary duty of faith to yield assent to the truth of God, how frequently soever, whatsoever, or in whatever manner God may speak. It is its peculiar duty to regard the will of God in Christ, his clemency, the promises of his grace, into a certainty of which things the Holy Spirit both enlightens our minds, and confirms our hearts.

46. Faith, therefore, is a firm and sure knowledge of God's good will towards us, which is based in God's free promise in Christ, and is laid open to our minds, and is sealed up in our hearts through the spirit.

47. The effects of faith are fourfold—1. Repentance. 2. A Christian life. 3. Justification. 4. Prayer.

48. Repentance consists of two parts—1. In the making ourselves dead [spiritually], which proceeds from the owning of sin, and from a true sense of the Divine judgment. 2. In the restoration to life, the fruits of which are piety towards God, and charity towards our neighbour, the hope of eternal life, holiness of living. To this genuine repentance is opposed that spurious one which partakes of contrition, confession, and satisfaction. The two former have indeed a relation to true penitence, provided that there be hearty contrition, through an acknowledgment of sin, and that it be not separated from a hope of pardon through Christ. But as to confession, let it either be private, made to God alone, or to the pastors of the Church, with freedom, and for the end of consolation, and not for the introducing an enumeration of sins, or torturing

the conscience; or confession may be public, such as the confession of the Church collectively, or of one or many persons, in the presence of the whole Church. Satisfaction, originally an ecclesiastical usage, employed for the edification of the Church, by reason of recovery from sin, and its open confession, has been made by the sophists to bear a relation to God; whence arose [the doctrine of] supplies of indulgences in this world, and of the purgatorial fire, after death. But that contrition of the sophists, also, auricular confession (as they call it), and satisfaction of work, are opposed to a gratuitous remission of sins.

49. Two parts are appointed to a Christian life. 1. The love of righteousness; thus, that we may be holy, because God is holy, we are conjoined with him, and are reckoned as his people. 2. That a rule may be prescribed for us which will not suffer us to stray in our course of righteousness, and that we may be made conformable to Christ. But his example is proposed to us, the likeness (formam) of which it is our duty to shew forth in our lives. The blessings of God are added, to which it will be the extreme of ingratitude in us not to act suitably.

50. The main purport of the Christian life, is to deny ourselves.

51. This self-denial hath four objects: 1. That we may consecrate ourselves to God as a living sacrifice. 2. That we may not seek our own but the things of God, and our neighbour. 3. That we may patiently bear the cross, the fruits of which are an acknowledgment of our own weakness, the proving of our patience, the correction of our faults, more earnest prayer, more prompt meditation on eternal life. 4. That we may know how to use the present life, and its aids, both as respects what is necessary and delightful. Necessity requires that we should possess all things as if we possessed nothing; that we bear penury without emotion of spirit, abundance without excess; that we may know to bear satiety, hunger, want, with patience; also that we take into our calculation the interests of our neighbour, because an account of our own stewardship is to be rendered; that all our actions may correspond with our calling. What is delightful ought to be to us a greater argument for praising the beneficence of God.

52. In the consideration of justification, which is the third effect of faith, the explanation of the word

itself first presents itself. He is said to be justified who, in the judgment of God, is accounted and held to be just. He is justified by works, whose life is pure and blameless before God, and no individual hath ever been such, Christ excepted. They are justified by faith, who, shut out from the justification of works, lay hold of the justification of Christ. Such are the elect of God.

53. The result of this is very firm consolation; for, in the place of a severe judge we have a most clement Father. Being justified in Christ, and having peace, we turn our thoughts unto sanctity, relying upon his power.

54. Also Christian liberty doth follow, which consists in three things. 1. That the consciences of the faithful may lift themselves up above the law, and may forget the entire justification of the law. 2. That the consciences of the faithful, free from the yoke of the law, may, "of their own accord," obey the will of God. 3. That they be constrained before God by no obligation of indifferent things. Here a caution must be noted against two precipices. 1. That we do not abuse the gifts of God. 2. That we avoid offence, whether given or received.

55. Prayer is the fourth effect of faith. In

prayer are to be noted, its fruits, its laws, its errors, its requests.

56. The fruits of prayer are five-fold. 1. Whilst we accustom ourselves to flee to God for refuge, our heart is enflamed with a greater desire to seek, to love, and to worship him. 2. No evil longing enters our heart of which it may shame us to make God a witness. 3. We accept his benefits with giving of thanks. 4. Having obtained a gift, we the more ardently meditate on the beneficence of God. 5. Experience confirms to us the goodness, providence, and truth of God.

57. The rules of prayer are four. 1. That we need not be ordered otherwise than as men who are entering upon conference with God. Therefore, the raising of the hands, emotion of heart, perseverance, may be recommended. 2. We must feel our own poorness. 3. We must abdicate every thought of our own individual dignity, giving glory to God in full. 4. Prostrate in the midst of the depths of woes, we should be animated with a sure hope of prevailing by entreaty, since we are relying upon the injunction and promise of God.

58. They are in error who offer up prayers to departed saints. 1. Because Scripture teacheth that

God is to be invoked, who alone knoweth what things are necessary for us; he is willing to be present, because he hath promised; he is able also, because he is omnipotent. 2. Because it is God's will that he be invoked by faith which rests upon his word and promise. 3. Because faith is corrupted as soon as it departs from this rule. Now, in the invocation of saints there exists no word, no promise; therefore there is no faith, nor can these saints either hear or assist.

59. The substance of the prayer delivered to us by Christ the Lord, is comprehended in a preamble, and two tables.

60. In the preamble shineth forth God's goodness, inasmuch as he is said to be "our Father;" it follows then that we are his sons. To seek, therefore, supplies from any other quarter would be to reproach God either with want (of power), or with cruelty (of nature). Sins hinder not that as suppliants we may implore mercy; an affection of brotherly love ought to intercede between us. In this preamble the power of God shineth forth, because he is in the heavens; from this we collect that God is diffused through all things, and that in seeking him it is becoming in man to be raised above

corporeal and spiritual sense: for that God is exalted above every accident of corruption or of change, encircling and governing the universe by his power.

61. The first table is wholly devoted to the glorification of God, and contains three petitions. 1. That the name of God, *i.e.*, his power, goodness, wisdom, justice, and truth, may be hallowed; that is, that men should never think upon or speak of God without the utmost veneration. 2. That God may correct, by virtue of his spirit, the depraved longings of the flesh, may form all our senses to an obedience of his authority, may protect his own sons, and break the endeavours of the impious. The use of this petition is triple; it draws us away from the corruptions of this world; it enkindleth the desire of mortifying the flesh; it animates us to an endurance of the cross. The third petition treats not of the secret will of God, but of that which becomes known to us through the Scriptures, to which will (our) voluntary obedience responds.

62. The second table contains three remaining petitions, which have relation to ourselves, and our neighbours. 1. It seeks all things which the body needs for its use, whilst subject to the elements of

this world; we commit ourselves to the care and providence of God, that he may feed, cherish, and preserve us. 2. We petition for those things which tend to spiritual life, namely, the remission of sins which takes away (the notion of) satisfaction; to which is appended this condition, that we ourselves having been injured by our neighbours in word or deed, do, nevertheless, pardon their offences towards us. 3. Liberation from temptation, or that we may be provided with arms, and be defended by divine succour, so that we may be competent to gain the victory. Temptations vary in their cause—God tempts; satan; the world; the flesh also; and material things, for we are tried by prosperous things, as wealth, honours, comeliness; also by adverse events, poverty, contempt, afflictions. We are proved by the result, for God tempts pious men for good: satan, the world, and the flesh, for evil.

63. Moreover, these four effects of faith lead us to a certainty of election, and of a final resurrection.

64. The causes of election are, the efficient, mere bountifulness of God, which we are bound to acknowledge with thanksgiving and humility: the material cause is Christ the beloved Son—the final cause, that we being sure as to our salvation because

we are of God, may for ever glorify him as well in the present as in a future life. Its results have respect to many individuals or to one; and that, in the electing some, and with justice reprobating others. The elect are called by the preaching of the word, and the illumination of the Holy Spirit; they are justified, sanctified, that at length they may be glorified.

65. There must be a final resurrection. 1. Because we cannot be perfectly glorified by any other method. 2. Because Christ hath already risen in our flesh. 3. Because God is all-powerful.

Aphorisms of John Calvin.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

66. God holds us fast in the fellowship of Christ by a government, ecclesiastical and civil.

67. In ecclesiastical government three points are to be considered. 1. What may constitute a Church. 2. How it may be ruled. 3. What may be its power.

68. The Church may be regarded in a two-fold view. 1. That unseen, universal Church, which is the communion of saints. 2. A visible specific Church; it is distinguished by the pure preaching of God's word, and by a lawful administration of the sacraments.

69. In respect of the Church's mode of rule, five points are to be weighed in the mind. 1. They who are over it. 2. Their qualification. 3. The nature of their call. 4. Their functions. 5. What may have been the structure of the olden Church.

70. Men, not angels, are over the Church. In this God declareth his goodness to us; we have the special practice of humility and obedience, also the best bond of mutual charity.

71. They who are over the Church are prophets, apostles, evangelists, whose office hath been for a time; also pastors and teachers who continue for ever.

72. Their call is two-fold. The call "within," and the call "without." The call "within" is from the Spirit of God. The call from "without" combines four points which must be weighed. 1. The qualifications of men to be chosen; viz., that they be endowed with wholesome learning, and good morals. 2. After what manner they are to be chosen; viz., with fasting and prayer. 3. By whom they are to be chosen; viz., immediately by God as prophets and apostles—mediately under the guidance of the word by Bishops, elders (in respect of age), and the people. 4. With what form; forsooth by imposition of hands, the use of which is three-fold. 1. That the dignity of the function may be set forth. 2. That he who is called may know that he is consecrated to God. 3. That he may believe that the Holy Spirit will not be wanting to this sacred ministry.

73. The duty of pastors in the Church is to preach the word, administer the sacraments, employ discipline.

74. The constitution of the olden Church was divided into presbyters, seniors, deacons, who distributed the property of the Church to bishops, clergy, the poor, and for the reparation of sacred edifices.

75. The power of the Church is to be considered in the relation of doctrine, legislation, and jurisdiction.

76. Its doctrine relates to decrees or points of faith, none of which decrees are to be delivered foreign to God's word, but all must have a reference to the glory of God, and the building up of the Church. It respects also the application of the decrees which ought to agree with the proportion of faith.

77. The laws of the Church, with respect to precepts of needful observance, ought to be conformable to God's written word. In matters of indifference a regard must be had to places, persons, seasons, together with the observance of order and decorum. But ordinances are to be shunned which are delivered by false pastors in place of the true worship

of God, which straiten the conscience by a narrow necessity, which make God's word of no force, which are useless and absurd, which by their number oppress conscience, which introduce a theatrical shew, which are valued as expiatory sacrifices, which are converted to gain.

78. The jurisdiction of the Church is two-fold. 1. That jurisdiction appropriated to the clergy, which is acted upon in provincial and general synods. 2. That jurisdiction which affects both clergy and laity, the intent of which is two-fold,—as well that offences may be hindered, as that offence which hath risen up may be put down. The executive jurisdiction consists in private and public admonitions; also, in expulsion from communion; the aim of which is three-fold. 1. Lest the Church be evil spoken of. 2. Lest the good be corrupted by the company of the bad. 3. That the expelled may, under a sense of shame, enter upon repentance.

79. By the same jurisdiction, fasts are appointed in reference to certain seasons, and vows are made. The object of fasts is, that the flesh may be grieved; that we may be better set in order for prayer; that they may be proofs of humility and obedience.

They consist in the time of taking food, its quality, and quantity. Here we must take heed, lest we rend our garments only, and not our hearts, as the hypocrites do; lest, when done, they be reckoned as a work of merit; lest they be exacted too rigidly, as if necessary to salvation.

80. In making vows, it is to be weighed in the mind, 1. To whom the vow is made, namely, to God: whence it follows that nothing must be attempted unless with his word going before us, by which we are taught what may please or displease God. 2. Who maketh the vow, viz., man. We must take heed, therefore, that we neglect not our own freedom; that we make no promise which is above our strength, or which is at war with our calling. 3. What may be vowed. Here, some consideration must be had of time; as well of that which is past—what is our vow of thanksgiving, and penitence?—as well of time to come, that hereafter we may be more cautious, and, by these incentives, be stirred up to our duty. Hence, it is apparent what must be thought of Papistical vows.

81. In explaining the sacraments, three things are to be considered. 1. Forsooth what is the outward symbol by which God sealeth as a wit-

ness the promises of loving-kindness towards us, in order to uphold the weakness of our faith. We also, in our turn, give witness of our piety towards him. 2. What things are needful—viz.: the sign, the matter signified, the promise, general communion. 3. How many in number are the sacraments—viz.: baptism, and the (Lord's) supper.

82. The sign of baptism is water; the thing signified is Christ's blood; the promise is life eternal. The communicants or partakers, are adult persons after having made a confession of faith. Infants are partakers as well as adults, inasmuch as baptism has succeeded to the place of circumcision, and in either, the mystery, promise, use, efficaciousness, are the same. Remission of sins doth also belong to infants, therefore the "sign" of this remission doth belong to them.

83. Baptism hath a two-fold end. 1. That it may minister to our faith towards God, because it is a sign of our washing through Christ's blood; also of the putting to death our flesh, and its being born again in Christ; moreover, we being united with Christ believe that we shall be partakers of all his good things, and that there will be no condemnation to us. 2. That it may minister to

profession, with reference to our neighbour. Because it is a token that we wish to be reckoned amongst the children of God. We give proof also that we confess the religion of Christ, and that we desire that all belonging to us should breathe God's praise.

84. The (Lord's) supper is a spiritual banquet, by which we are preserved in that life whereunto God hath by his own word begotten us.

85. The end of the supper is three-fold. 1. That it may serve to the strengthening our faith towards God. 2. To our making confession before men. 3. To an exhortation to mutual love.

86. Heed is to be taken lest, in setting too small a value on the signs, we tear them away too much from their proper mysteries, unto which, in a manner, they are knit; and also, lest, in exalting the signs beyond bounds, we seem to make inconsiderable the mysteries themselves.

87. The parts of the (Lord's) supper are two. 1. Spiritual truth, in which is to be considered its signification in promises; also the subject matter, Christ dead and alive again: the effect, viz., our redemption and justification. 2. The signs seen, bread and wine.

88. The Papistical mass is opposed to the (Lord's) supper. 1. It treats Christ with affront. 2. It burieth his cross. 3. It annuls his death. 4. It takes away the blessings which we obtain in Christ. 5. It enfeebleth the sacraments in which a remembrance of his death is left.

89. The following are falsely reckoned sacraments. Confirmation, penitence, extreme unctions, ordination, which hath produced the *greater*, or the *lesser* "orders," matrimony.

90. There remaineth a civil administration, which relates to outward righteousness of manners.

91. Here is to be considered magistracy, laws, commonalty.

92. The magistrate holds the place of God, he is a father of his country, a guardian of the laws, he presides over the administration of justice, nurseth the Church.

93. By these names he is stirred up to his duty. 1. That before God he may walk holily, and before men may exhibit integrity, prudence, continence, innocence, righteousness. 2. That by special comfort he may soothe the difficulties of his office.

94. Specific forms of magistracy, or civil administration, are monarchy, aristocracy, democracy.

95. As concerning laws, we must weigh well what should be their constitution, by taking into account the nature of God and man; then their equitable application by an attention to times, places, nations.

96. The people oweth to a magistracy, 1. reverence as to God's legate, and that with sincerity of mind. 2. Obedience, whether in fulfilling edicts, or paying tributes, or undertaking public offices and burdens. 3. Affection, by which a people may commit the prosperity of rulers in prayers to God.

97. We are commanded to obey not only good magistrates, but also all who are in authority; even should they exercise a tyranny: for they are not appointed leaders without God's decree.

98. Moreover, when tyrants rule, there may first enter the recollection of our sins, which, by such scourges, are punished. Hence, a humbleness of soul will put a rein upon our impatience; also, a deduction, that it is not our province to apply the cure to such ills. This only remains, that we implore help from God, in whose hand are the hearts, and inclinations of kings.

99. God, however, checks the furiousness of tyrants by two modes; either stirring up some of his own

servants as evident avengers who may rescue the people from tyranny; or, directing to the same end the rage of men who are thinking and plotting another design, thus overthrowing one tyranny by another.

100. Obedience now prescribed to special persons doth not hinder but that there may be popular magistrates whose province it may be to restrain tyrants, and to defend the liberty of the people. But obedience is to be rendered to magistrates, with this salvo, "that the proper right of the king, who is supreme, remain entire and untouched."

Appendix.

Appendix.

A.

The Donatist Church was the result of a double election to the Archiepiscopal throne of Carthage. Cæcilianus and Majorinus were the two rival primates of Africa, and the death of the latter soon made room for Donatus, a man of superior abilities, and apparent virtues.

The dispute was finally settled after a severe inquisition into the claims of the candidates. The Prætorian vicar, the Proconsul of Africa, the decrees of the Councils of Rome and Arles, the supreme judgment of Constantine himself were all favourable to the cause of Cæcilian, who was unanimously acknowledged by the civil and ecclesiastical powers as the true and lawful Primate of Africa. The Donatists refused to acquiesce in this decision, disputed the election, and denied the powers of the usurper; they boldly excommunicated the rest of mankind who had embraced the party of Cæcilian, and of those who ordained him. They asserted with confidence, that the Apostolical succession was interrupted: that all the bishops of Europe and Asia were chargeable with guilt and schism, and that the prerogatives of the Catholic Church were confined to the chosen portion of the African Church, which had preserved the integrity of their faith and discipline. Their conduct was consistent with their theory. Whenever they acquired a proselyte even from the distant provinces of the east, they

carefully repeated the rites of baptism and ordination, as they rejected the validity of those already received from the hands of heretics and schismatics.

Bishops, virgins, and even infants were subjected to a public penance before they could be admitted to the communion of the Donatists. If they obtained possession of a Church which had been used by their Catholic adversaries, they purified the unhallowed building with the same jealous care which a temple of idols might have required. They washed the pavement, scraped the walls, burnt the altar (which was commonly of wood), melted the consecrated plate, and cast the holy Eucharist to the dogs, with every circumstance of ignominy which could provoke, and perpetuate the animosity of religious factions. This memorable schism afflicted the provinces of Africa above three hundred years, and was only extinguished with Christianity itself. Vide Gibbon's Roman History, vol. iii. chap. 21. Calvin also, in the 4th book of his Institutes, chap. 13, speaks of the Donatists as "men so imbued with the false persuasion of their own absolute sanctity, that they became, as it were, certain ætherial demons, and despised all intercourse with their fellow men, in whom they perceived the traces of humanity." "Such," he adds, "are some Anabaptists of the present day, who wish it to appear that they have made progress beyond others."

B.

Acatius, Bishop of Amida, knowing that a vast multitude of Persians were perishing from hunger, called together the clergy and thus addressing them, "Our God hath need neither of cups nor platters, for he neither eats nor drinks," melted the sacred vessels that he might provide food and ransom for these unfortunates. 1. Acatius, Lib. ii. cap. 16. Triper: Hist.

C.

Ambrose, when accused of having broken up the sacred vessels to provide the ransom for prisoners, offered this beautiful apology: "He who sent forth his apostles without gold, hath gathered the Churches without gold. The Church possesseth gold, not to keep, but to bestow it and make it serviceable in cases of necessity. What need to guard closely that which is of no use? Are we ignorant what a mass of gold and of silver was by the Assyrians carried away from the temple of God? Is it not better that the priest melt it down as alms for the poor if other modes of relief be wanting, than that a sacrilegious enemy carry it away? Would not the Lord speak thus:—Why didst thou suffer so many poor to die from hunger when in truth thou hadst gold whence thou couldst have supplied alms? Why are so many captives led away unransomed? Why so many slain by the enemy? Better to keep vessels of living men, than of metal. Thou canst give no reply to this: for dost thou say, I had fear lest ornament should be wanting to God's temple? The Lord would answer thee thus:—sacraments require not gold, neither do things take pleasure in gold which are not bought with gold. The ornament of sacraments is the ransoming of the captives." De Off., lib. ii., cap. 28.

D.

The Council of Basil, like its precursor, that of Constance, dissolved in the year 1418, was reluctantly summoned by Pope Martin fifth, and again by his successor, Eugenius the fourth, to pacify the clamorous demand for a Reformation of the Church, which the general voice of Christendom sent forth. Cardinal Julian Cæsarini presided: its session opened on the 23rd of July, 1431; the points proposed for deliberation were, the union of the Greek and Latin Churches, and

the Reformation of the Church Universal in its head, and in its members. The Pope strove hard to dissolve this Council, but the fathers who composed it were earnest, and persevering in their work, and established this principle—that the authority of the Council was superior to that of the Roman Pontiff. The latter, after a long dispute, first conceded this claim by his silence, and then by a letter from Rome expressed his approval of the Council, and his acknowledgment of its authority. The reforming acts of the Council so alarmed and offended the Pope, that, with a view of neutralizing its exertions, he tried to transfer its place of meeting into Italy, which was prudently resisted by the members of the Council. By virtue of their admitted jurisdiction they summoned the Pope to appear at Basil, which requisition was met by a decree from Eugenius, pretending to dissolve the Council at Basil, and to assemble another at Ferrara. This decree was set at naught by the Council, who, with the consent of the Emperor, the King of France, and several other Princes continued its deliberations at Basil, and on the 28th September, 1437, pronounced a sentence of contumacy against the Pontiff, for having refused to obey its mandate. The only act of moment accomplished by the Pontiff's Council at Ferrara, (afterwards transferred to Florence,) was a reconciliation between the Greek and Latin Churches, some doctrinal concessions on the part of the former, "and an acknowledgment," that the Roman Pontiff was the supreme judge, the true head of the universal Church. Meanwhile, the legitimate Council of Basil had not been idle, but impatient of the acts and imperiousness of Eugenius, deposed him from the Papacy on the 25th June, 1439, and in spite of Papal thunder, elected Amadeus in his room. Thus, at the same time, Christendom was scandalized by the rivalry of two popes and two councils, and its day of Reformation was postponed.

E.

The Catabaptists are thus alluded to in Calvin's Institutes, book 4th, cap 16. "Moreover, if this be true which we have laid down that a Sacrament is not to be appreciated with reference to the hands of him by whom it is administered, but, as it were, with reference to the very hand of God, from whom, without doubt, it has proceeded, then it is a lawful conclusion that nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be subtracted from its dignity in consideration of the hand of him who delivereth it. Such reasoners are the Catabaptists of this our day, who deny that we are baptized after a proper ritual, because we receive baptism at the hands of impious men and idolaters, therefore, they fiercely press a rebaptizing of us. Against their trifling absurdities we are fortified by a sufficiently strong reason, when we reflect that by baptism we are initiated not into the name of any man, but into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: therefore, baptism is not of man, but of God, by whomsoever the rite shall have been administered. So that allowing that our baptizers have been pre-eminently ignorant, and the despisers of God and true piety; yet they have not dyed us into a fellowship of their own ignorance or profaneness, inasmuch as they invoked not their own name but the name of God, neither have they baptized us into any other name."

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Author Calvin, Jean

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